



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION IX  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

July 26, 2000

Nick Chevance  
Western Area Power Administration  
Environment, A3400  
P.O. Box 281213  
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

**Re: Blythe Energy Project - Lead Agency Request for Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation**

Dear Mr. Chevance:

This letter is to confirm that Western Area Power Administration (Western) has agreed to act as the lead federal agency in the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation process for the Blythe Energy project near the city of Blythe in Riverside County, California. (Your letter dated June 9, 2000 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) stated that Western was indeed the lead agency.) We understand that Western will submit a biological assessment (BA) to the FWS Carlsbad office, with a copy to EPA, as part of the consultation.

Under Section 7, EPA must ensure that final action on a Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) air permit to be issued Region 9 is contingent upon the completion of the consultation process, whether it be formal or informal. The issuance of the PSD permit is also conditioned upon the understanding that the applicant will implement any necessary or appropriate mitigation or minimization measures identified as a result of the consultation process with regard to affected species or critical habitat. We look forward to working with you as the lead agency to ensure that both our agencies' ESA obligations are met for this project. We request that your office provide us a copy of any correspondence and/or documents concerning the consultation process at the following address:

Duong Nguyen  
U.S. EPA, Region 9 (AIR-3)  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Fax Number: (415) 744-1076

1142. If you have any questions, please contact Duong Nguyen of my staff at (415) 744-

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gerardo Rios", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gerardo Rios  
Acting Chief, Permits Office

cc: Daniel Dickinson, Blythe Energy  
Debbie MacAller, FWS  
Alan De Salvio, Mojave Desert AQMD  
Lance Shaw, CEC  
Ray Menebroker, ARB